

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7                   **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
8                   **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**  
9                   **WESTERN DIVISION**

10 BACKGRID USA, INC.

Case No. 2:22-cv-09462-DMG-ADS

11                   Plaintiff(s),

12                   **INITIAL STANDING ORDER**

13                   v.

14 TWITTER, INC., et al.

15                   Defendant(s).

16  
17                   **PLEASE READ THIS ORDER CAREFULLY. IT GOVERNS THIS**  
**CASE AND DIFFERS IN SOME RESPECTS FROM THE LOCAL RULES.**

18                   COUNSEL FOR PLAINTIFFS SHALL SERVE THIS ORDER  
19 IMMEDIATELY ON ALL PARTIES AND/OR THEIR COUNSEL, INCLUDING  
20 ANY NEW PARTIES TO THE ACTION. IF THIS CASE WAS REMOVED  
21 FROM STATE COURT, DEFENDANT WHO REMOVED THE CASE SHALL  
22 SERVE THIS ORDER ON ALL OTHER PARTIES.

23                   This case has been assigned to the calendar of Judge Dolly M. Gee. Both  
24 the Court and counsel bear responsibility for the progress of this litigation in  
25 federal court. To “secure the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination” of this  
26 case, as called for in Fed. R. Civ. P. 1, all parties or their counsel are ordered to

1       become familiar with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the Local Rules of  
2       the Central District of California, and this Court's standing orders.

3           **1. SERVICE OF THE COMPLAINT**

4       Plaintiff shall promptly serve the complaint in accordance with Fed. R. Civ.  
5       P. 4 and file the proofs of service pursuant to Local Rule 5-3.1. Any defendant not  
6       timely served under Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(m) shall be dismissed from the action  
7       without prejudice.

8           **2. ASSIGNMENT TO A MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

9       Under 28 U.S.C. § 636, the parties may consent to have a Magistrate Judge  
10      preside over all proceedings, including trial. The Magistrate Judges who accept  
11      those designations are identified on the Central District's website, which also  
12      contains the consent form.

13           **3. DISCOVERY**

14           **a. Discovery Matters Referred to Magistrate Judge**

15       All discovery matters have been referred to the assigned United States  
16      Magistrate Judge, who will hear all discovery disputes. The Magistrate Judge's  
17      initials follow the District Judge's initials next to the case number. All discovery-  
18      related documents must include the words "DISCOVERY MATTER" in the  
19      caption to ensure proper routing. Counsel are directed to contact the Magistrate  
20      Judge's courtroom deputy clerk to schedule matters for hearing. Please comply  
21      with Local Rule 37 and deliver mandatory chambers copies of discovery-related  
22      papers to the Magistrate Judge assigned to this case rather than to this Court.

23       In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(A), the Court will not reverse any  
24      order of the Magistrate Judge unless it has been shown that the Magistrate Judge's  
25      order is clearly erroneous or contrary to law.

26       Any party may file and serve a motion for review and reconsideration before  
27      this Court. *See* Local Rule 72-2. The moving party must file and serve the motion  
28      within fourteen (14) days of service of a written ruling or within fourteen (14) days

1 of an oral ruling that the Magistrate Judge states will not be followed by a written  
2 ruling. The motion must specify which portions of the ruling are clearly erroneous  
3 or contrary to law and support the contention with points and authorities. Counsel  
4 shall deliver a conformed copy of the moving papers and responses to the  
5 Magistrate Judge's courtroom deputy clerk at the time of filing.

6       **b. Compliance with Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)**

7       Unless there is a likelihood that upon motion by a party the Court would  
8 order that any or all discovery is premature, **it is advisable for counsel to begin to**  
9 **conduct discovery actively before the Scheduling Conference.** At the very least,  
10 the parties shall comply fully with the letter and spirit of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)  
11 and thereby obtain and produce most of what would be produced in the early stage  
12 of discovery, because at the Scheduling Conference the Court will impose firm  
13 deadlines to complete discovery.

14       **4. MOTIONS - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

15       **a. Time for Filing and Hearing Motions**

16       Motions shall be filed in accordance with Local Rule 7. This Court hears  
17 motions on **Fridays, beginning at 9:30 a.m.** If Friday is a national holiday, the  
18 motions will be heard on the next Friday. It is not necessary to clear a hearing date  
19 with the judge's courtroom deputy clerk before filing a motion, except for motions  
20 for summary judgment or preliminary injunction. If the motion date selected is no  
21 available, the Court will issue a minute order continuing the date.

22       **b. Pre-Filing Requirement To Meet and Confer**

23       Counsel must comply with Local Rule 7-3, which requires counsel to engage  
24 in a pre-filing conference "to discuss thoroughly . . . the substance of the  
25 contemplated motion and any potential resolution." Counsel should discuss the  
26 issues to a sufficient degree that if a motion is still necessary, the briefing may be  
27 directed to those substantive issues requiring resolution by the Court. Counsel  
28 should resolve minor procedural or other non-substantive matters during the

1 conference. The *pro se* status of one or more parties does not negate this  
2 requirement.

3       **c. Length and Format of Motion Papers**

4 Memoranda of points and authorities shall not exceed 25 pages. *See* Local  
5 Rule 11-6. Only in rare instances and for good cause shown will the Court grant  
6 an application to extend these page limitations. **No supplemental brief shall be**  
7 **filed without prior leave of Court.**

8 If documentary evidence in support of or in opposition to a motion exceeds  
9 50 pages, the evidence must be separately bound and tabbed and include an index.  
10 If such evidence exceeds 200 pages, the documents shall be placed in a Slant D-  
11 Ring binder, with an index and with each item of evidence separated by a tab  
12 divider on the right side.

13       **d. Citations to Case Law**

14 Citations to case law must identify not only the case cited, but the specific  
15 page referenced.

16       **e. Citations to Other Sources**

17 Statutory references should identify with specificity the sections and  
18 subsections referenced. Citations to treatises, manuals, and other materials should  
19 include the volume, section, and pages being referenced.

20       **f. Oral Argument**

21 If the Court deems a matter appropriate for decision without oral argument,  
22 the Court will notify the parties in advance.

23       **5. SPECIFIC MOTION REQUIREMENTS**

24       **a. Motions Pursuant to Rule 12**

25 Many motions to dismiss or to strike can be avoided if the parties confer in  
26 good faith (as required by Local Rule 7-3), especially for perceived defects in a  
27 complaint, answer, or counterclaim that could be corrected by amendment. *See*  
28 *Chang v. Chen*, 80 F.3d 1293, 1296 (9th Cir. 1996) (where a motion to dismiss is

1 granted, a district court should provide leave to amend unless it is clear that the  
2 complaint could not be saved by any amendment). Moreover, a party has the right  
3 to amend the complaint “once as a matter of course at any time before a responsive  
4 pleading is served.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 15(a). A Rule 12(b)(6) motion is not a  
5 responsive pleading and therefore plaintiff might have a right to amend. See, e.g.  
6 *St. Michael’s Convalescent Hospital v. California*, 643 F.2d 1369, 1374 (9th Cir.  
7 1981); *Nolen v. Fitzharris*, 450 F.2d 958, 958-59 (9th Cir. 1971). Even after a  
8 complaint has been amended or a responsive pleading has been served, the Federal  
9 Rules provide that leave to amend should be “freely given when justice so  
10 requires.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 15(a). The Ninth Circuit requires that this policy  
11 favoring amendment be applied with “extreme liberality.” *Morongo Band of*  
12 *Mission Indians v. Rose*, 893 F.2d 1074, 1079 (9th Cir. 1990)

13 These principles require that plaintiff’s counsel carefully evaluate  
14 defendant’s contentions as to the deficiencies in the complaint. In most instances,  
15 the moving party should agree to any amendment that would cure the defect.

16 **b. Motions to Amend**

17 In addition to the requirements of Local Rule 15-1, all motions to amend  
18 pleadings shall: (1) state the effect of the amendment and (2) identify the page and  
19 line number(s) and wording of any proposed change or addition of material. The  
20 proposed amended pleading shall be serially numbered to differentiate it from  
21 previously amended pleadings.

22 Counsel shall electronically file a “Notice of Lodging,” attaching the  
23 proposed amended pleading as a document separate from the motion, and shall  
24 attach as an appendix to the moving papers a “redlined” version of the proposed  
25 amended pleading indicating all additions and deletions of material.

26 **c. Motions for Class Certification**

27 The deadline for the filing of a motion for class certification will be set  
28 pursuant to the parties’ stipulation, during the Scheduling Conference, or in a

1 Scheduling Order.

2           **d. Summary Judgment Motions**

3           Parties need not wait until the motion cutoff to bring motions for summary  
4 judgment or partial summary judgment. The hearing on any such motion shall be  
5 set for a date in advance of the Final Pretrial Conference. Each side may bring **one**  
6 motion for summary judgment or partial summary judgment. The parties shall not  
7 attempt to evade the page limitations for briefs by filing multiple motions.

8 **Whenever possible, the party moving for summary judgment should provide**  
9 **more than the minimum 28-day notice for motions.** The parties should prepare  
10 papers in a fashion that will assist the Court in absorbing the mass of facts (e.g.,  
11 generous use of tabs, tables of contents, headings, indices, pinpoint citations, etc.).  
12 The parties are to comply with Local Rule 56-1 through 56-2, taking into account  
13 the Court's additional requirements described below.

14           **i. Statements of Uncontroverted Facts and Genuine Disputes**

15           The Separate Statement of Uncontroverted Facts required under Local Rule  
16 56-1 shall be prepared in a two-column format. The left-hand column sets forth  
17 the allegedly undisputed fact. The right-hand column sets forth the evidence that  
18 supports the factual statement. The factual statements should be set forth in  
19 sequentially numbered paragraphs. Each paragraph should contain a narrowly  
20 focused statement of fact. Each numbered paragraph should address a single  
21 subject as concisely as possible. The "Conclusions of Law" portion of the  
22 Statement should be inserted after the Statement of Uncontroverted Facts.

23           The opposing party's Statement of Genuine Disputes of Material Fact must be  
24 in two columns and track the movant's separate statement exactly as prepared.  
25 The left hand column must restate the allegedly undisputed fact, and the right hand  
26 column must state either that it is undisputed or disputed. The opposing party may  
27 dispute all or only a portion of the statement, but if disputing only a portion, it  
28 must clearly indicate what part is being disputed, followed by a brief citation to the

1 opposing party's evidence controverting the fact. To demonstrate that a fact is  
2 disputed, the opposing party must briefly state why it disputes the moving party's  
3 asserted fact, cite to the relevant exhibit or other piece of evidence, and describe  
4 what it is in that exhibit or evidence that refutes the asserted fact. No legal  
5 argument should be set forth in this document.

6 The opposing party may submit additional material facts that bear on or  
7 relate to the issues raised by the movant, which shall follow the format described  
8 above for the moving party's separate statement. These additional facts shall  
9 continue in sequentially numbered paragraphs and shall set forth in the right hand  
10 column the evidence that supports that statement.

11 With its Reply, the moving party shall file a Response to the Statement of  
12 Genuine Disputes of Material Fact and Additional Material Facts. For each fact,  
13 the Response shall restate the allegedly undisputed fact and state whether the fact  
14 is disputed or undisputed by the opposing party. If the fact is undisputed, no  
15 further response is required.

16 If the fact is disputed, the Response shall restate the opposing party's  
17 evidence and reason for disputing the asserted fact. The moving party may provide  
18 a response to the opposing party's reason for dispute, including any reason why the  
19 evidence cited by the opposing party does not create a genuine dispute and/or any  
20 additional evidence relevant to the asserted fact. This response may either be  
21 presented in three columns, with the response appearing in the right-hand column,  
22 or in two columns, with a response provided below each fact.

23 The Response may also include any response to additional material facts  
24 asserted by the non-moving party, and this response shall follow the format  
25 described above for the Statement of Genuine Disputes of Material Fact. The  
26 response to these additional facts shall continue in sequentially numbered  
27 paragraphs, and shall not restart the numbering.

28 \\\

1 All facts asserted by either party, whether disputed or undisputed, and all  
2 supporting evidence cited, shall be included in the Response. **DO NOT REPEAT**  
3 **DESCRIPTIONS OF AND CITATIONS TO THE EVIDENCE.** If you have  
4 already described and cited the evidence once, simply refer to the earlier citation  
5 succinctly (e.g., *See supra*, Fact # 1). See PDF samples on Judge Gee's Procedures  
6 and Schedules website for preferred formatting examples.

7           **ii. Supporting Evidence**

8       No party shall submit evidence other than the specific items of evidence or  
9 testimony necessary to support or controvert a proposed statement of undisputed  
10 fact. For example, entire deposition transcripts, entire sets of interrogatory  
11 responses, and documents that do not specifically support or controvert material in  
12 the separate statement shall not be submitted in opposition to a motion for  
13 summary judgment.

14     Evidence submitted in support of or in opposition to a motion should be  
15 submitted either by way of stipulation or as exhibits to declarations sufficient to  
16 authenticate the proffered evidence, and should not be attached to the  
17 memorandum of points and authorities. Documentary evidence as to which there  
18 is no stipulation regarding foundation must be accompanied by the testimony,  
19 either by declaration or properly authenticated deposition transcript, of a witness  
20 who can establish authenticity.

21           **iii. Objections to Evidence**

22     If a party disputes a fact based in whole or in part on an evidentiary  
23 objection, the ground of the objection should be succinctly stated in a separate  
24 statement of evidentiary objections in a two-column format. The left column  
25 should identify the items objected to (including page and line number if applicable)  
26 and the right column should set forth a concise objection (e.g., hearsay, lacks  
27 foundation, etc.) with a citation to the Federal Rules of Evidence or, where  
28 applicable, a case citation.

1           **6. PROPOSED ORDERS**

2           Each party filing or opposing a motion or seeking the determination of any  
3 matter shall serve and electronically lodge a proposed order setting forth the relief  
4 or action sought and a brief statement of the rationale for the decision with  
5 appropriate citations. In addition, a copy of the Proposed Order in Word or  
6 WordPerfect format shall be emailed to Judge Gee's generic chambers e-mail  
7 address using the CM/ECF System on the day the document is e-filed.

8           **7. COURTESY COPIES**

9           All original filings are to be filed electronically pursuant to Local Rule 5-4.

10          No chambers copy is required for CIVIL cases, except at the specific request of the  
11 Court.

12          If requested by the Court, chambers copies shall be delivered to and placed  
13 in the Judge's courtesy box, located outside of the Clerk's office, on the 4th floor,  
14 by 5:00 p.m. on the first court date after the filing date.

15          All exhibits, declarations, etc. to chambers copies must be tabbed, where  
16 applicable. Blue-backs and hole punches are not required.

17          Chambers copies of under seal documents shall all be placed together in a  
18 manila envelope labeled "UNDER SEAL."

19           **8. TELEPHONIC AND VIDEO HEARINGS**

20          The Court may permit appearances or arguments by way of telephone or  
21 video upon a showing that a personal appearance will cause undue hardship.

22          If you wish to appear by telephone or video, you must (a) email the courtroom  
23 deputy clerk and copy opposing counsel at least three (3) court days in advance  
24 of the scheduled appearance; (b) in the case of telephonic appearances, use a  
25 landline to call into the bridge line provided by the clerk; and (c) be available  
26 at that number for at least 15 minutes before the time of the scheduled hearing.

27          \\\\

28          \\\\

1           **9. EX PARTE APPLICATIONS**

2           The Court considers *ex parte* applications on the papers and does not usually  
3 set these matters for hearing. If a hearing is necessary, the parties will be notified.  
4 *Ex parte* applications are solely for extraordinary relief and should be used with  
5 discretion. Sanctions may be imposed for misuse of *ex parte* applications. *See*  
6 *Mission Power Engineering Co. v. Continental Casualty Co.*, 883 F. Supp. 488  
7 (C.D. Cal. 1995).

8           Counsel's attention is directed to the Local Rules. *Ex parte* applications that  
9 fail to conform to Local Rule 7-19 and 7-19.1, **including a statement of opposing**  
10 **counsel's position**, will not be considered except on a specific showing of good  
11 cause. The moving party shall electronically serve the opposing party, if possible.  
12 A party is considered served once the *ex parte* application has been e-filed (all  
13 parties set up for electronic service are sent a notification of ECF filing each time a  
14 document is e-filed with a link to the document for one free view). Parties set up  
15 for service by fax or mail must be served the *ex parte* application by fax or  
16 personal service.

17           Following service of the *ex parte* papers by electronic service, fax, or  
18 personal service, the moving party shall notify the opposition that opposing papers  
19 must be e-filed no later than twenty-four (24) hours following service. If counsel  
20 does not intend to oppose an *ex parte* application, he or she must inform the  
21 courtroom deputy clerk at (213) 894-5452.

22           **10. CONTINUANCES**

23           This Court has a strong interest in keeping scheduled dates certain. Changes  
24 in dates are disfavored. Trial dates set by the Court are firm and will rarely be  
25 changed. Therefore, a stipulation to continue or extend the date of any matter  
26 before this Court **must** be supported by a sufficient factual basis that demonstrates  
27 good cause why the change in the date is essential. Without such compelling  
28 factual support and a showing of due diligence, stipulations continuing dates set by

1       this Court will not be approved. Counsel requesting a continuance or extension of  
2       time must electronically file a stipulation and lodge a proposed order including a  
3       **detailed** declaration of the grounds for the requested continuance or extension of  
4       time. Failure to comply with the Local Rules and this Order will result in rejection  
5       of the request without further notice to the parties. Proposed stipulations extending  
6       scheduling dates do not become effective unless and until this Court so orders.

7       **Counsel should avoid submitting requests for continuance or extension of time**  
8       **less than five (5) court days prior to the expiration of the scheduled date.** A  
9       request to continue or extend dates or deadlines that have already expired is  
10      presumptively a lack of due diligence.

11      **11. ORDER SETTING SCHEDULING CONFERENCE**

12      Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P.16(b), the Court will issue an Order setting a  
13      Scheduling Conference as required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26 and the Local Rules of  
14      this Court. Strict compliance with Fed. R. Civ. P. 16 and 26 is required.

15      IT IS SO ORDERED.

16  
17      DATED: February 23, 2023

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DOLLY M. GEE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28